

SUNDAY ADVERTISER

RODERICK O. MATHESON

EDITOR

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MAY 22

Jack London Takes his Pen in Hand

---Novelist Writes and Receives Reply

JACK LONDON TO L. A. THURSTON.

Mr. Lorrin A. Thurston.

Dear Friend—I have just finished reading your reply to my letter, published in The Sunday Advertiser. And first of all, let me say that I have only kind appreciation for the kindness of the tone of your letter. On the other hand, I can not but deprecate the logic of your reply.

There were two ways in which you could have replied to me. (1) You could have replied to me and the points I made, or (2) you could have replied holding in mind the effect of what you said on the reading public.

In the latter respect, the newspaper man is inflexible. So it was in this latter way that you replied—that is to say, you replied neither to me nor to the points I made, but you had your eyes on your reading public all the time you were replying. In this reply of yours, my resentment of Bystander's abuse was undiluted factually; while Hawaii's resentment of my short stories was handled seriously. Now, from a standpoint of logic and of fair play, you can not mix oil and water this way. This factious reply to my resentment was just the trick of debate of which any newspaper man would be expected to be guilty. It is purely a trick of debate, you know, and I think you also know that I sincerely need to point it out to you.

Now, to some more of your illogic. In my original letter, I said that Hawaii was provincial because of the habit she had of elevating every chance visitor to her shores on a pedestal seemingly for the purpose of casting potshots at him, of receiving a guest with open arms, and of adorning him roundly as soon as he had departed. In my particular case, I was called a "sneak of the first water," "a thoroughly untrustworthy man," and "an ungrateful and untruthful boonder." Also I was called "a dirty little sneak." I pointed out clearly that it was this behavior on the part of Hawaii that incurred the charge of her being provincial. Nevertheless, by a clever shift on your part in your reply, you gave your readers to understand that I based the charge of provincialism upon the fact that I had been robbed by some several of the citizens of Hawaii. Now, Mr. Thurston, this will do for the reading public, but I leave it to you if you think it will do for me. Mind you, I am only asking you if you think such illogic will do for me.

In my original letter, in reply to the charge of being ungrateful, I pointed out that Hawaii owed me nothing; that Hawaii had subsidized me not one cent, and that if it came to a showdown, when it came to matter of dollars and cents, Hawaii had got the best of me. This was particularly apt modern business retortence at the hands of some several of Hawaii's citizens. It certainly was not provincial. My point in making it was that I was not indebted to Hawaii, and therefore could not have incurred the charge of ingratitude. I was not squealing about my experiences in Hawaii; I was merely pointing out that I was not the various vile things that Bystander had asserted I was. It strikes me that Hawaii began to squeal first of all, through the mouth of Bystander, and turned then to deliberate lying abuse. Nor am I squealing now about this abuse. I am merely trying to point out to Hawaiian newspaper men the way of their feet through the fields of logic.

In another place in your letter, you regret the harshness of Bystander's remarks. Bystander called me "a dirty little sneak," "a sneak of the first water," "a thoroughly untrustworthy man," and "an ungrateful and untruthful boonder." Now, Mr. Thurston, you do not in your letter say that these epithets of Bystander are untrue. I am driven to conclude that, while you judge them unduly harsh, they are nevertheless true, and that I am a dirty little sneak, boonder, etc. Maybe you were letting Bystander down easily. If so, you did not let me down easily. Either I am or I am not these various things. I want to know where I stand in your estimation. It's up to you. This, on your part, is merely another favorable trick of debate, namely, the sliding out of a difficult position under the seeming of fair speech while granting or recanting nothing.

One other thing: suppose the Irish should object to the telling of funny Irish stories, and the Jews should object to the telling of funny Jewish stories, and the Dutch, and the Swedes, and the English, and the Scotch, and all the rest of the nationalities; immediately would result a paucity of funny racial stories. By the same token, if Hawaii should hold that her most salient characteristics should not be exploited in fiction, and if Ireland and England and South America, and Africa and Asia, should take a similar stand—well, fiction would go glimmering, that's all. Because, by the same token, every man and woman in every walk of life, trade, or profession, could make a similar objection to having his walk of life, trade, or profession exploited in fiction.

I think Hawaii is too touchy on matters of truth and while she complains in her newspapers exploits the weaknesses and afflictions of other lands, gets audibly excited when her own are exploited. Furthermore, the several purely fictional stories on leprosy written by me have not shaken the world at all, Hawaii's fevered imagination to the contrary. My several stories have not stopped one person from going to Hawaii, nor one dollar from being invested in Hawaii. Believe me, Stevenson's Father Damien Letter has had more effect in a minute, and will go on having more effect in a minute, than all the stories I have written or shall ever write.

And, finally, while I can sympathize with the excessive irritability and excitability of Hawaii on the matter of its leprosy, I do object to Hawaii's unfairness in slinging billingsgate. Argument is argument, but abuse is ever dastardly. And whenever you get your opponent abusing you, believe me it is a sign you've got him going. I love Hawaii, I'm not afraid of Hawaii, its citizens, or its afflictions. But I should like to see the newspaper end of Hawaii buck up a bit, cease its provincialism, and strive to be at least as logical as the newspapers on the mainland. Sincerely yours,

JACK LONDON.

Glen Ellen, California.

P. S.—Dear Kakinna:—Really, you've laid yourself open to the above, because your reply was hopelessly illogical, and you brazenly shifted the bases of the points of argument. But, anyway, if I get 25 cents a word, think of all the words The Advertiser is getting for nothing. And by the way, don't fail to mail me a copy of The Advertiser in which the foregoing is printed. I was indebted to a chance letter from a person in Honolulu for a copy of your reply. None was mailed me by your office.

J. L.

L. A. THURSTON TO JACK LONDON.

My Dear Mr. London:—I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter, further discussing the subject of whether or not Hawaiian newspapers and newspaper men are "provincial," as illustrated by an anonymous writer in the Honolulu Advertiser having called you a "sneak," and attributed to you a fairly comprehensive list of other "undesirable" qualities.

In the first place, I apologize for not having earlier printed your letter and reply thereto, as requested by you. The seeming neglect arose from the letter having been received just as I was taking a steamer away from Honolulu. It was held for reply upon my return, but was mislaid, and has only just come to light from among some papers which had been put away. Its aroma is undiminished by time, however.

I note that you call upon me to say, in open meeting, whether I think you fit the "Bystander's" description, and that you carry the war into Africa by characterizing me as an "incorrigible newspaper man," guilty of a "trick of debate," with keeping my "eyes on the reading public," devoid of "logic and fair play," "illogical," "sliding out of a difficult position under the seeming of fair speech while granting or recanting nothing," "hopelessly illogical," "brazenly shifting base," etc., etc.

It would appear that if "when you get your opponent abusing you, it is a sign you've got him going," there are others on the move besides The Bystander.

Your expressed opinion of me does not worry me, for the reason that I know that it is not founded on fact, and further that I do not believe that you believe it yourself. I think that I rather "got under your skin," in my reply to you, and that with somewhat of a smart to your conscience, you have assumed the "offensive defensive," rather than admit that your treatment of Hawaii has been ungenerous.

My personal opinion of you was in no way involved in the hitherto published articles, and I doubt whether the public is interested therein; but as you ask for it, I give it to you. I do not think that you are a sneak nor that you possess the other undesirable qualities attributed to you by The Bystander. That is probably because, through a closer personal acquaintance, I got beneath the rough exterior to your mannerisms, and had some opportunity to become acquainted with your kinder and more genial side than has been exhibited to The Bystander and the world at large.

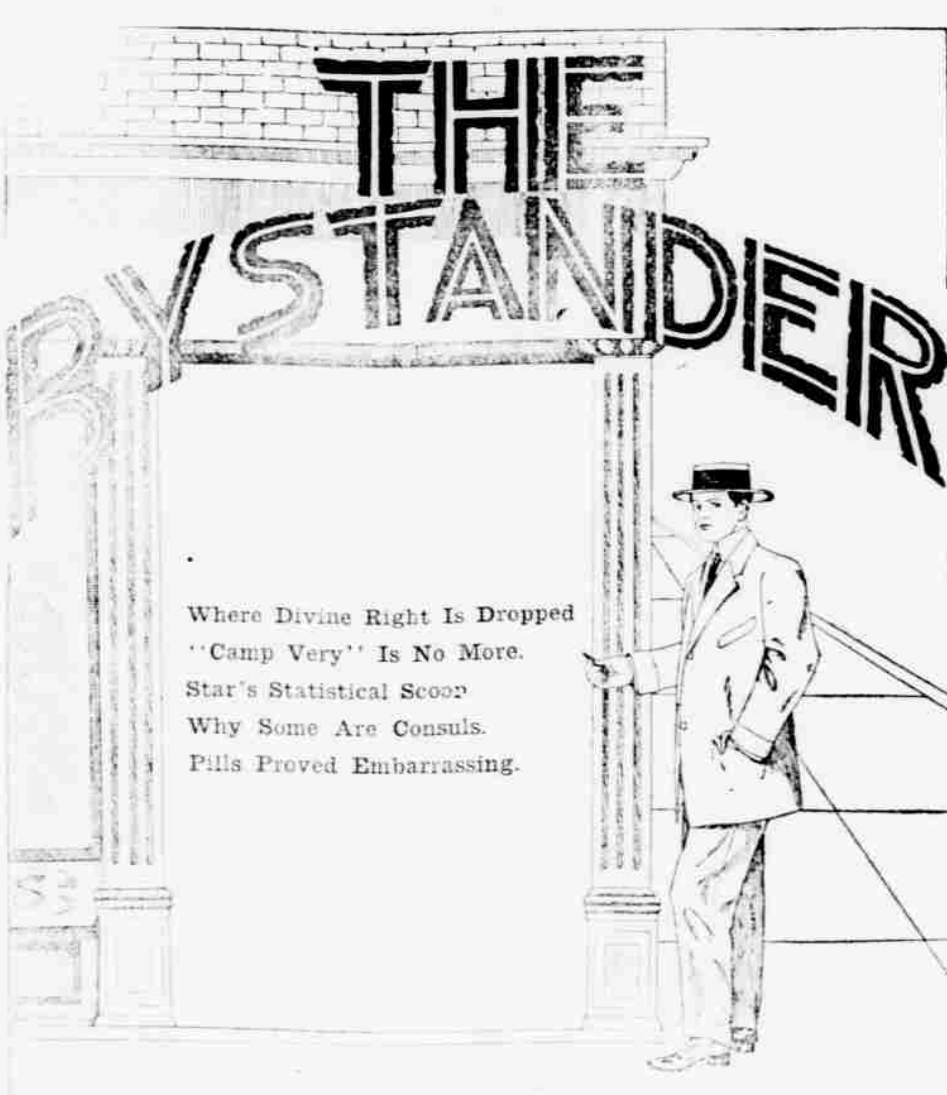
The gist of this whole matter is not whether you are a sneak or I a trickster; whether Honolulu and the rest of the world is a nest of "robbers," illegitimately seeking your coin, or whether Hawaiian journalists are of the blackguards type. It harks right back to the original theme which aroused The Bystander, viz:—

You came to Hawaii and absorbed local color enough to give realism to your tales. You then began a series of gruesome stories in which leprosy was the theme and Hawaii the setting. None of them were true. They were pure fiction; but like the historical novel, worked in so much fact with the fiction, that they give the impression to the uninitiated that they are more fact than fiction, the net result of which is to create an untrue impression, injurious to Hawaii, that this is an unsafe and undesirable place to live in.

You attempt to justify your action by claiming that Hawaii should not object to "her most salient characteristics being exploited in fiction," and comparing your objection to being played up as the "leper islands," to a possible objection of the Irish, the Jew and the Dutch to the telling of "funny stories" about them. You also say that you "love Hawaii."

If I really thought that you were so mentally deficient as to be unable to distinguish between a "funny story" and a series of publications harping upon the fact that some of your "loved" neighbors are afflicted with a loathsome disease, I should no more think of appealing to you to stop it, than I would try to stop a sewer from discharging its contents.

In the first place, leprosy is not a "salient characteristic" of Hawaii. It is not indigenous. It was imported from China, and the very first case ever seen in Hawaii was during the lifetime of men now in the prime of life. It is being intelligently handled, and is in process of being stamped out. It is a



Where Divine Right Is Dropped
"Camp Very" Is No More.
Star's Statistical Scoop
Why Some Are Consuls.
Pills Proved Embarrassing.

King George V. is not "King, by the Grace of God," in one of the British Provinces, whatever his claim to rule by Divine Right may be elsewhere throughout the Empire. The only place in his realm where his claim to be the Lord's anointed is disputed is in Ontario, that land of Presbyterianism and universities, and there the dispute is due only to a clerical error. When the official proclamation concerning the accession of George to the throne of Edward was issued by the Provincial Secretary at Toronto, the words "by the Grace of God" were unintentionally left out. This proclamation went into an extra edition of the Gazette and by publication became law. In the meanwhile the government printing presses were running on the new legal forms, required by the enthroning of a new sovereign, because there when one commits any transgression of the law he does it "against the peace of His Most Gracious Majesty" with all the titles, and it is the Crown, not the People, who prosecute. The forms went to press before the proclamation issued and millions of blanks had been printed and packed ready for distribution before the omission was discovered. Then there were bonfires and all the printed forms were destroyed. Consequently, when an Ontario farmer Ricks a neighbor, he disturbs only the peace of George, King of Great Britain and Ireland, Emperor of India, Defender of the Faith and a few other things, but not "by the Grace of God."

When you wander down to the Naval Station, made sacred by the memory of Captain Carter and the scene of some of his most famous engagements, do not refer to the place where the marines are located as "Camp Very." If you do you will have reason to believe that Carter has returned, in fine form. The Naval Station folk don't like any portion of their settlement to be known as a "camp." It sounds too much to them like the description given to the Russian village in Iwilei or to the model tenements from which Theodore Richards collects rent.

If you have acquired the habit of saying "Camp Very," forget it. It is no longer that. It is now, "the Marine Barracks, Naval Station." Remembering this will enable you to retain the friendship of the boys and officers camped on the spot where Liholiho signed the first Hawaiian Constitution.

The Star's federal cook book is drawing to a close. I have not forgotten the rebuke I earned by putting forth a mild suggestion that I had been aware, even before the fact appeared in the cook book, that meat bills could be reduced by eating less meat. That rebuke hurt me, because I didn't intend to criticize the Star. I intended rather to compliment some senator or other who had got a friend a job writing such a cook book. I don't know what I shall get for calling attention to the Star's statistical scoop, but I can not resist, so here goes. It was rather startling to read last night under big headlines that "Hawaii has gained 64,011 population." The statement in the headline was borne out by matter beneath, under a date line of "Washington, May 5." The year was omitted. It ought to have been May 5, 1905, or something like that. The figures, 64,011, showing Hawaii's estimated gain in population, have been appearing in the annals of New York newspapers for years back. I found them two years ago on page 633 of the World's Almanac for 1908, for instance. I don't mind a cook book so much. But this thing of getting a scoop from an annual several years old will have to stop.

It is only the other day that I discovered the reason for the presence in Honolulu of so many consuls of foreign powers. It was until recently a source of wonder to me why the Sultan of Turkey, the Prince of Montenegro and the Dalai-Lama had to be represented in Honolulu by anyone. Now, I know. I met a friend on Tuesday last, sailing along the street in a Chinese hack. He wore knee breeches, a cocked hat, three pounds of gilt lace, a sword with an ivory handle and a look of pride. I thought he was out advertising "When Knighthood Went to Seed," or something like that.

"What's up?" I asked, as the hack drew to the curb to give a couple of racing automobiles the right of way.

"Going to pay my first official call on the Governor," he said. "I have just been appointed Consul-General for Panama. How d'ye like my uniform?"

"What do you want to be a consul for?" I asked, amazed.

"Don't give it away," he whispered back. "I learn that consuls don't have to serve on juries, so I'm going to be one."

I can not help holding a venomous reflection on all scientists in general and astronomers in particular over the rank fizzle press agented as Halley's comet. Such a fall was there, my countrymen, for the gentlemen of the telescope, the spectroscope, and other scopes not worth mentioning. And they were so confident, too, that it is almost a pity to fill in the graves of their manifold basities without spilling a few tears at the head of them.

I might excuse the gentleman who prophesied dire destruction to the only original sugar and pineapple hothouse in creation, but can not possibly forgive the coterie of wisecracks who figured out the transit of the comet to minutes and seconds and made the newspapers pay cable rates on it; who theorized about magnetized tails, chemicalized space and comatized nuclei, as if it made difference whether we call the head of a comet a nucleus or a boiled potato. It all only went to prove that Creation was never figured out in mathematics and there are curves in other things besides comet's tails.

Woe unto the land where Art is doled out to the populace according to the length of the pocketbooks thereof. List to the pake peddler and the little obdied washerwoman wail over slashed and mutilated altars of Art; list to the disgruntled millionaire groan over the doubtful beauty that is foreshortened to suit the measure of his chief cook and bottlerwasher's purse.

Know ye, my brethren, that the Moving Picture Man who has stood by us so long in our artless calamity and supplied us that wherewith we might refresh our tired brain has thrown us down cold. He has decided that we are an unintellectual lot unworthy of his best efforts, and quantity, not quality, has become his motto.

True, he puts on as much or even more films as he ever did and his subjects include animated extracts from Maeterlinck and Deadwood Dick; partially, but he has conceived in his consummate wisdom the idea of trimming them down, shortening his program and gathering the mezzuma of one more audience every evening. Therefore the wail. For he has not extended his wisdom to the trimming and has with diabolical wisdom cut out all the necessary action and left the frills.

We are astounded when we see a cowboy staggering famished in the Mexican desert, suddenly eating tortillas and frijoles from a decorated table that has suddenly appeared on the scene without visible excuse. We are more astounded when the villain, about to wreak his vengeance on the Fair and Blushing One, is suddenly transfixed by a sword wielded by the hero, who has materialized out of thin air. We assure the pake peddler and the little washerwoman that this is not modern magic, but is due solely from the fact that the worthy manager has cut out that part of the film wherein the hero makes a labored entrance into the dungeon merely in consideration of the fact that your little dime, ten cents, can't cover the added length.

I only desire to call attention to that Pathe representation of Rigoletto that became famous in the States and was reproduced at a local canned drama shop this week. People appeared and disappeared in the center of the room pictured on the film in such rapid succession that the ladies couldn't even get the cut of the clothes. The manager even cut out the title.

Harry Lake found a blue yesterday, a real odorous blue that could be smelt at least two blocks under favorable circumstances. Like most of Harry Lake's clues they caused confusion to somebody and the biter was badly stung this time, Captain Lake coming off the field covered with glory.

About four in the afternoon yesterday, Levi, who makes coats and pants, observed a pake drop a purse through the grating on Fort street near the Japanese consular building and pass blissfully on, unconscious of the fact that he had separated himself from it. This, however, was unknown to the gallant captain who did not arrive on the scene until he observed a mob of people around the grating where a small boy was fishing for the purse with a long pole. Naturally, he walked across to make inquiries and just as he reached the spot, the urehin arose triumphant.

"Hey, there, youngster," commanded Lake, "whose purse is that?"

"That's Mr. Levi's, sir," the youth replied. "He said it belonged to his sister in law and told me to get it."

"Well," mused the city and county detective, "let me deliver the goods. I always do."

He repaired to the tailor store of Mr. Levi further up the street.

"Say, is this your purse?" he asked of Levi in a belittling manner.

"Sir, that is the purse of my sister-in-law. She dropped it down the grating," replied the maker of coats and pants.

"Lemme see inside," said the Captain and forthwith proceeded to investigate.

"Ahem, three coins."

"Correct."

Then, "Say, friend, do these three pills of opium belong to yer sister-in-law, too?"

Small Talks

LINK M CANDLESS—What do I think of prohibition? Why, yes, SHERIFF JARRETT—I am glad that the Czar heard about my lenient qualities.

CORONER ROSE—The wild and woolly west was nothing like this in its palmiest days.

REV. STEPHEN DESHA—Kuhio is stronger on the Big Island today than he has ever been.

SUPERVISOR QUINN—The county attorney didn't know anything about that building ordinance. I'm responsible for that and I want all the glory.

ANDERSON GRACE—Dat Billy Woods is a wise man, all right, but he ain't got the right kind of fowls for dis nigger, even if he did build de coop on High Henry's place.

COUNTY PHYSICIAN MACKALL—The county needs its own hospital where it could look after general as well as maternity cases. It would cost something to start with but it would pay in the long run.

DEPUTY SHERIFF ROSE—It seems to me it would be advisable for the Territory to cover auto-speed cases, to do away with the county supervisors' ordinance. The territorial law would be stronger and better enforced.

SENATOR DICKEY—I believe, if anyone wanted to go far enough to law about it, a man could refuse to give the census men any information about himself at all. What business is it of the United States where a man was born and who his grandfather was? Of course, I didn't care to have trouble, so I told.

JAMES A. WILLIAMS—The indignation expressed in The Advertiser and on the streets, at the automobile outrages, would be greater if people generally knew, as I know, that some drivers deliberately turn their machines out of their course, in a spirit of deviltry, to frighten people they pass. They regret it great fun to run within a foot or two of unsuspecting people and watch them jump. When the frightened person jumps the wrong way, or the machine does not steer just as its driver expects it to, then—then there may be a widow, and orphans somewhere who can not appreciate the mirth of the people who were in the automobile.

HATS OFF!!

Editor Advertiser:—Men are sometimes critical, and especially so where women are concerned. To them the wearing by women of large hats has proved obnoxious. But we pick up the threads of gossip, and find, neither are men going to abate the noticeable, unfidy hair arrangements. Think of the housewife hurriedly preparing the Sunday morning breakfast, putting things to rights, and hurrying off to service—the breezes play havoc with her locks, that there has evidently been no time to adjust. A hat would cover defects, but she has not one that can be seen through, so she lets her locks go uncovered, and tries to pin down the wayward ones, but to small advantage. And men's minds are distracted with the appearance of straggling locks and switches not in tune. But men are not the only ones disturbed. Conscious of being subjects for scrutiny and criticism, women are not satisfied with their personal appearance.

Paul was a wise man, and sympathetic we think, when he said: "Let the women cover their heads in the house of God." He understood, and no doubt realized the necessity, as a matter for appearance sake. But he certainly did not tell the women to let their headgear be fifty cubits high! Nor did he tell them, when the evening lights were turned on there would be incandescent effects; also, to beauty or hide defects, women might wear ribbons, pearls and other ornaments as at a theater.

The man who started the ball to rolling of "hats off" was in a bad temper, and incited others into a tempest, that has created more sickening ill feeling and opposition than a blast of powder against a newly-painted house. And it does not stop there, who is, or what is, to pay the cost for repairs?

Better leave the women to their own opinions, as to what is best to wear or not to wear. Advise with them if need be how to adorn themselves in a befitting manner, with hats in modest size, as has been life's custom.

The problem can be solved. Let the disgruntled ones be allotted seats in the church to the right or to the left, or let them take the front seats. Let the women wear small hats, not alone for man's sake, but for the sake of the own vision, and nothing can be too tidy, neat and pretty for the house of the Lord.

Put, then, upon your church calendar: "Hats on! small ones preferred." For the sake of peace.

TRUTH.

ident, too, that it is almost a pity to fill in the graves of their manifold basities without spilling a few tears at the head of them.

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